

## Live Stock and Dairy

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Inquiries of Progressive Farmer readers cheerfully an-  
swered.

### Dairymen Need Babcock Test and a Good Sire.

I will take it for granted at this late day that there is scarcely a producer of milk but what will admit that the Babcock test honestly used will give us an honest account of the sample of milk being tested. For certainly if anything has stood the test of time the Babcock test has done so, and the only way I believe you can make it dishonest is to use it dishonestly which practice I am pleased to state is not in vogue to any larger extent at the present time.

When the test was first introduced I heard elders and deacons of churches declare by all things good and great that they knew it was not right. All the trouble with them was the test showed that their milk was very low in butter fat and this they either could not, or would not, believe. Now, I never heard of a man whose milk tested above the average complaining that he believed the test was dishonest. Did you?

I remember an amusing incident which happened at one time at a farmer's institute several years ago. The conductor gave notice that any person who would bring a sample of milk the next day could have it tested by him. Quite a number brought samples and when the tests were read before the audience it was found the lowest one tested 1.8 per cent and the highest one—9, quite a variation. The others tested from 3 to 6. Of course the conductor suspicioned something was wrong with these two samples, so he asked the parties to explain how they got their samples. Well, the man whose milk tested low had a good dozen excuses. First it was a young heifer's milk, and she was nervous and did not stand well to be milked. Then he fed the calf part of the milk and said he did his chores before taking the rest of the milk to the house. He guessed it got chilled, and three of four other excuses. Now, the truth of it was the milk never was very good milk.

### STRIPPINGS TESTED 9 PER CENT.

The party whose milk tested 9 said he forgot to take out a sample while he was milking, but after he had finished milking his one cow (he lived in town and only kept one cow) he thought of the sample he was to take to be tested. As he had the bottle in his pocket, he went to the cow and stripped her till he got enough for his sample. He thought, no doubt, at the time that he was getting an honest sample of his cow's milk, but at the present time we know that the sample which he secured was perhaps twice as good as a correct sample of her milk would be. It has been proven that while the first milk drawn from a cow may test as low as 1 per cent, and the last, or stripping, may test over 10, it is doubtful if a fair sample of her milk would test over 5.

It was claimed when the test of using a testing machine could go into a man's herd of cows and by the aid of this test tell at once which were the poorest cows. And if these were weeded out his profits would increase at once. Now, this wonderful part of the test I never believed, nor do not yet believe it entirely. However, I sincerely believe that the Babcock test will tell to a certainty the difference in the butter fat content of various patrons' milk as it is delivered at the creamery or butter factory, but I do not believe any man can go into Smith's or Jones' herd and tell him which cows to dispose of to enable him to make more money, simply because cows will vary so much from year to year. While a cow may be doing poorly this year, perhaps the owner knows she did better last year, and is in hopes she will do better next year. Now, I do

not mean she varies so much in test, but in milk.

### IMPROVING THE DAIRY HERD.

I have known cows to do twice as well some years as others, and I believe every one who keeps cows has experienced the same thing. When the test was new I saw it tried several different ways. One man had milk which tested low when he delivered it at the creamery, so low, in fact, that it was believed he was delivering something besides milk. He had his cows tested, and found some in his herd which did not test but little over 2 per cent, while he had others which tested twice as much. The low testing cows, however, in many instances were giving milk enough to make as much butter as those which tested higher. As he wanted his milk to test higher at once, so, of course, he sold his low testing cows. His milk improved some in test, but he did not become rich any faster, because he had not as yet improved his herd, although he had improved his test. He had plenty of feed and plenty of help to milk, as many more cows, and he tried buying them, but soon found this was a poor way to improve his herd. There are few men, I believe, who are able to go out and buy a good herd of dairy cows. I have seen some men who were able to do it, but they, like good cows, are scarce. This man finally sold, not only his cows, but his farm, for he said he was disgusted with the Babcock test. His son bought the farm and is making a success where his father made a failure.

One of the most perfect models of a dairy cow I ever saw only tested 2.4 per cent fat, but she gave fifty pounds of milk per day; so you see she was quite a cow. The owner of this cow, as he had some others just like her, took a wiser way to improve his herd than by selling them and buying others. He bought a sire for his herd out of a cow which tested 5 per cent, and inside of five years he had a herd of cows which tested over 4 per cent, and expects to be able to still improve on this. Now, this was done by the aid of the Babcock test and a good bull, and this, I believe, is the true way to improve a herd of dairy cows.—A. C. Stiles, of Lake Mills, Wis., in Farmers' Sentinel.

### FARM NOTES FROM THE MOUNTAINS.

**Cheap Crab Grass Hay—Experience with a Small Thresher—Raising Colts and Cattle Cheaply—Notes About Corn and Alfalfa.**

Editors Progressive Farmer:

I am still about as busy as a man can be, but will try to write a few lines anyhow.

For some weeks since I have been short of help. The boys who were spending vacation with me as farm hands, by way of paying their board and tuition for next term, all left for one cause or another, and while I could get all the hands I wanted from the neighborhood, they were none of them situated so they could help me about the milking and feeding. Therefore this most important work has taken up my early and late hours so that I have had little time for anything. We are well along with fodder saving; up with all that's ripe enough. Have been saving crab-grass and pea hay to-day and mowing the potato patch. It is nearly waist high with crab-grass and very few weeds. I made the mistake of ridging the potatoes at last plowing. Will have them flat next year, as the ridges are hard on machine and horses. I believe my four acres of potatoes will yield more hay than twice that area of my best meadow.

The potatoes are fine so far as we have used, which is very little. Want to dig them between October 1st and 15th. Expect to follow with wheat after preparing the land thoroughly and spreading what manure we have. Am going to try to produce one hundred bushels of wheat from five acres next year. Crop only averaged about nine bushels per acre this year, but as I threshed

thirteen bushels of fine grain from less than one-half acre (21,000 square feet), this year I know it can be done.

Speaking of threshing, I am in the business now. The only machine in our section burned last spring. I had a good crop and was bound to save it. We had a two-horse tread power. I bought a small thresher made by Heebner & Sons, of Pennsylvania, adapted to be driven with light power. It weighed only 1,050 pounds. Cost but little over \$400. Four men could load it in a farm wagon with ease.

With this rig we threshed all the grain of the neighborhood, 1,062 bushels, reaching as high as 150 bushels per day. Two farm horses did most of the work, though we had a pair of mules to change with them sometimes. Seven to nine men, all told, were sufficient to operate it, and I never want to see the big machine with its big crowd again. The gross earnings of the season's work were \$94.35.

About peas, I find that peas sowed broadcast did well, peas sowed in drills and cultivated did better, but peas drilled and let alone did not pay. Rye was a poor crop, but I turned the stubble and have a crop of late corn on it now that is coming in full ear fast. It will make an immense feed crop. Sowed crimson clover at last cultivation. Sowed some also on oat stubble well prepared. Have good stand.

Our alfalfa seems to have failed utterly. I cut a clean crop of crab-grass from the patch recently. If it disappoints me in the spring I'll have a fine piece of ground for corn.

Cocke's prolific corn did not look like much when I got the seed from Richmond last spring, but it is the talk of the neighborhood now. Has from two to six good ears to the stalk. It will soon do to gather; then I can tell what it did.

My colts are doing well, and now that the heaviest work is over, the mares are regaining all the flesh and spirit that they need. The two colts are not for sale at \$100, but I suppose that is about their value. They have not cost \$25, and have been no trouble at all. This makes quite a nice addition to the product of the mare's work.

Sell those old plugs that eat all you make every year, brother farmer, and also do your work with good brood mares or young mules that will make you money besides their work.

I was out lately to see our range cattle. Have fourteen head in the mountains. Found them fat as moles, and well contented. They would gather around the man who ranges them, lick salt from his hand, and let him pet and rub them—as gentle as you could wish. They have cost us less than seventy-five cents per head for five months' keep, during which time they have gained at least one hundred pounds per head. They are of all classes—from old cows to little calves. Some have doubled in weight.

There is something in these mountains for a cattle-man who is prepared to follow the business right; lease a big range, wire it in, and look after his stock.

I must wind this up and get to work. Hope I can give you something better next time.

W. H. DANIEL.

"The Willows," Hot Springs, N. C.

To measure cattle to ascertain the weight of them alive, multiply the distance around the animal back of the fore-shoulder, in feet, by itself, and then multiply that result by  $17\frac{1}{2}$ , and you have very nearly the weight of the animal. For more accurate results, instead of multiplying by  $17\frac{1}{2}$ , multiply by five times the length of the animal in feet, measuring from the fore part of the shoulder-blade to the bone at the tail, in a vertical line with the buttocks. Divide this product by  $1\frac{1}{2}$ , for average cattle, 1.425 for very fat, 1.575 for very lean, and you have the dressed weight of the animal.—F. Adams.